
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20426



NEWS RELEASE

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:

Celeste Miller
(202) 208-0680

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COMMISSION APPROVES INCREASE IN GENERATION AT HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT IN THE WEST

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has approved a plan to permit a temporary increase in hydroelectric generation at the Priest Rapids Hydroelectric Project in Washington State, helping to meet electric power needs in the West this summer.

The Commission is suspending part of an interim requirement which allows the licensee to spill water for 16 hours a day during the summer migration of fish. This will allow for an exchange of spill and power with the Bonneville Power Administration, thereby assuring flexibility and reliability to the regional grid and protecting listed fish species. The plan would have no adverse effects on fish species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

The Priest Rapids project will be able to produce an additional 219,600 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity.

In addition, the Commission is seeking comment on a staff alternative that would suspend spill for an additional eight hours per day, thereby providing additional generation to the region of 109,800 MWh.

The project, licensed to the Public Utility District No. 2 of Grant County, Washington, has a capacity of 1755 MW. It is subject to interim spring and summer spill flow requirements to protect fish until a final determination is made by the Commission for appropriate flows or other mitigation.

The latest action is in response to a Commission order issued on March 14, 2001, which urged all hydroelectric licensees in the 11 states of the Western Systems Coordinating Council

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(WSCC) to examine their projects and propose any efficiency modifications that may increase generation without causing unnecessary environmental harm.

Hydropower accounts for 65 percent of the Northwest's power generation. The Commission regulates 326 projects in the WSCC with a combined total capacity of 24,600 MW.

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